



# Department of Justice

United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott  
Eastern District of California

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## **TEXAS COED DUBBED THE “PONYTAIL BANDIT” PLEADS GUILTY TO BANK ROBBERY IN THREE STATES**

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that MORGAN MICHELLE HOKE, 21, of Austin, Texas pleaded guilty this morning to three counts of bank robbery before United States District Court Judge Morrison C. England Jr.

The case is the product of an investigation by the Sacramento Violent Crimes Task Force, which includes the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Roseville Police Department, and the Sacramento County Sheriff’s Office. The Austin Police Department in Texas and the Lynnwood Police Department in Washington also participated in this investigation.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Michelle Rodriguez, who is prosecuting the case, the task force dubbed the perpetrator the “ponytail bandit” because surveillance photos showed the robber to be a young woman wearing her hair in a ponytail that was pulled through the back of a baseball-type cap.

HOKE admitted that on May 7, 2007, she robbed the Wachovia Bank, 845 Mesa Drive, in Austin, Tex. She used a note and made oral demands, to include a threat to the life of the teller. Additionally, she admitted that on May 23, 2007, she robbed the Wells Fargo Bank, 2000 Douglas Blvd., in Roseville, Calif., and that on May 30, 2007, she robbed the First Heritage Bank, 19009 33rd Avenue West, in Lynnwood, Wash. After she committed the three robberies, she fled the United States and was later arrested in Thailand. Altogether, she obtained nearly

\$15,000.

HOKE faces up to 20 years in prison for each count, three years of supervised release, and a \$250,000 fine. The actual sentence, however, will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables and any applicable statutory sentencing factors.

HOKE remains in federal custody and is scheduled to be sentenced on October 30, 2008.

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